



October 2020

DID YOU KNOW?

Since 1980, American farmers have increased overall soy production by 96% while reducing soil erosion by 65% and overall land use by 35%. GHG emissions and energy use have also decreased – by 41% and 42% respectively.

[More about U.S. soy sustainability.](#)

U.S. Agriculture Secretary Says Europe has Forgotten the Farm in Farm to Fork



The EU's Farm to Fork strategy will stifle the very innovation needed to feed a growing world population sustainably, says U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue. He fears that “the EU is letting inaccurate public perception rather than sound science drive policy, which will prove to be at the detriment of their own hardworking farmers and the world’s consumers.”

[Read his opinion piece.](#)

Communicating Science: It's Not Just What You Say but Who Says It That Matters

Getting to know your audience is the foundation of effective science communication, says 2020 CAST Communications Award winner Dr. Alexa Lamm, of the University of Georgia. The message is just as important but scientists often get it wrong, using too much jargon and statistics and not enough visual cues. She shares the findings from her research on how to drive acceptance of complex issues such as citrus greening, which show that the wrong messaging and the wrong source are often behind public rejection of science. [Tune in to her presentation for more on best practice science communications.](#)



U.S. Organic Sales Increase to Nearly \$10 Billion



Sales of American organic commodities overall rose by 31% to \$9.93 billion from 2016 to 2019, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's 2019 Organic Survey report. Livestock and poultry products, primarily milk and eggs, increased by the smallest amount (12%). Crops, livestock and poultry increased by larger amounts (38% and 44%, respectively). 58% of organic sales came from crops, led by vegetables and fruits - including berries and tree nuts. [Read details and more statistics here.](#)

USSA Farmer Spotlight: Fifth-generation Farmer Kim Gallagher on Conserving Water and Keeping the Soil Alive

11 years ago, former science teacher Kim Gallagher swapped the classroom for the open countryside of her childhood. Today she runs Erdman Farms, Yolo County, California with her husband Pat, taking over the reins from her parents. We spoke to her about some of the practices she's using to conserve water and boost soil health for the benefit of her crops, which include almonds, rice, wheat and sunflowers.

[Read Kim's story.](#)



Leather Industry Calls for Suspension of Unfair Sustainability Score for Leather



The global leather industry has formally asked the Sustainable Apparel Coalition to suspend the “unfair” score it applies to leather in its latest Higg Materials Sustainability Index. In a joint letter, the Secretary of the International Council of Tanners, Dr. Kerry Senior writes that “inappropriate methodologies” and “out-of-date, unrepresentative, inaccurate and incomplete data” have led to a score that damages

leather’s reputation. [Read about the leather industry’s concerns.](#)

National Institute of Food and Agriculture Invests Over \$7M in Predictive Technology Research

USDA’s National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) has awarded 12 grants totaling over \$7 million to initiate research into predictive technology innovations needed to keep U.S. agriculture on the leading edge of food and agricultural production. According to Dr. Parag Chitnis, acting director of USDA-NIFA, the research will not only deliver data-driven solutions for today but will also “contribute to the growing body of science that will lead us to future technological advances not yet imagined to meet both current and future challenges.” [Learn more.](#)



USSA Cooperators Among Field to Market Members Making Public Climate Commitments



A new report from *Field to Market: The Alliance for Sustainable Agriculture* highlights the public climate commitments of 89 of its members – a number of whom belong to the US Sustainability Alliance. Its aim: to help agri-food organizations benchmark their ambition with peers, drive greater performance, facilitate collaboration, and promote transparency and accountability. [Read the report.](#)

Video Diary: A Day in the Life of an American Chicken

American chickens are healthier and better cared for than ever before. Chicken farmers trained in animal welfare do everything they can to make sure their birds are healthy and comfortable. They pre-warm the chicken house before new chicks arrive, work with expert poultry nutritionists to ensure the chickens are getting the proper nutrients for each stage of their life, and check on their birds up to three times a day. [Watch the National Chicken Council video series.](#)





The U.S. Sustainability Alliance strives to provide current and important stories about America's farmers, fishermen and foresters. Please let us know how we're doing by taking our 1-minute survey.

Video Diary: A
American chick
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[video series](#).

[SURVEY](#)

USSA Member Organizations:

Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute; Almond Board of California; American Hardwood Export Council; American Peanut Council; Cotton Council International; Food Export Association of the Midwest; Food Export USA Northeast; Leather and Hide Council of America; North American Export Grain Association; North American Renderers Association; Organic Trade Association; Softwood Export Council; USA Poultry & Egg Export Council; USA Rice Federation; U.S. Dairy Export Council; U.S. Dry Bean Council; U.S. Grains Council; U.S. Meat Export Federation; U.S. Soybean Export Council; and U.S. Wheat Associates

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The U.S. Sustainability Alliance (USSA) is a group of American farmers, fishermen and foresters who have come together to explore and share our values regarding sustainable practices and conservation programs.

We welcome your comments and views. Please contact us at:

<https://thesustainabilityalliance.us/contact-us/>

